

Minutes of the Library Advisory Committee (LAC)

For the Montgomery County Correctional Facility (MCCF) – Boyds, MD.

For February 5, 2018

The meeting was called to order by the LAC Chair, Katharine Lorr. Also in attendance were LAC members Mier Wolf, Richard Lorr, and Patricia Hulsebosch, whose LAC membership is pending; Liaison to the LAC for the Montgomery County Library Board Tanner Wray; and MCCF Library Assistant Denise Habib, Deputy Warden for Inmate Services Gale Starkey, and Warden Suzi Malagary, who appeared briefly. Absent: Frank Joseph, Tim Warner, and James Donaldson

Before the meeting, Ms. Starkey took the LAC members in attendance on a very instructive and congenial tour of the jail. She subsequently invited them to the staff dining room for an enjoyable lunch.

There was a time limit for the meeting so that Ms. Lorr led a very efficient meeting. The topics and content are numbered and described below.

1. A reading of the minutes of the January 26, 2018 meeting, and any discussion of the Financial Report, the Acting Library Manager's report, and the Library Board's liaison' report were waived and the minutes were approved as written.

2. We discussed Membership recruitment. Ms. Lorr agreed to contact the poet Zana Hassan, who had previously recited her poetry to inmates, to see if she was a resident of Montgomery County, and thus qualified to join the LAC and, if so, whether she would like to join the LAC. We agreed to recruit at least one former inmate who has been released for at least two years. It was agreed that Rev. Warner is an excellent beginning for our diversity efforts. Mr. Wolf has contacted the Clarksburg Chamber of Commerce in hopes of identifying a Committee member prospect from that organization. He also agreed to contact several county non-profit organizations for the same purpose.

3. Ms. Habib reminded us that our committee needed to comply with jail scheduling for our quarterly meetings. It appears that Monday mornings at 11:00 a.m. quarterly will work.

4. Mr. Wray suggested that LAC members should attend County budget forums. Mr. Wray also noted that the Library Board is in the process of updating its LAC manual. We discussed the need for the LAC to address needs of library managers and facility uses as well as addressing programming. An example is the need for used books described by Ms. Habib. Mr. Wolf and other LAC members are especially concerned about improving the acoustics for our programming especially when events are held in the all-purpose room. Ms. Lorr requested a fuller Library Managers report in the future.

5. The LAC discussed poetry programming. New ideas included saving the poetry of the inmates and making it available in the library. For the events, opening the poetry reading to inmates who entered the contest as well as the contest winners was considered. This change needs to be thought through in terms of time limits for the poetry program events which also may include readings from outside poets

and refreshment time. It was suggested that there might be poetry discussion periods at these events or poetry discussion and writing topics for some of the events. Ms. Starkey suggested and offered to have events with themes like Black History Month, Father's Day and Mother's Day. The dates and timing of poetry events need to be carefully planned along with other activities provided the inmates by the jail. Basically, the event hours are normally between 8 to 11 a.m. or 1 to 4 p.m. on any given day. Ms. Starkey mentioned that evening events could be planned as well which of course depends upon the logistics for the presenters.

6. There is strong optimism within the LAC that this organization can serve inmates in ways that will help them improve their lives now and in the future.

7. Our next LAC board meeting will be held on April 9 at the jail at 11:00 a.m. Ms. Lorr agreed to reach out to James Donaldson, the MCCF Library's Interim Library Manager as well as an MCPL Acting Assistant Director, about the viability of an off-site meeting near or in his office on March 12.

Minutes prepared by Mier Wolf, LAC Secretary, February 6, 2018, and forwarded by Richard Lorr